

INTRODUCTION

The current issue of *Cracow Indological Studies*, despite its self-explanatory title, *Worlds of Poetics: Implementation of Rhetorical Devices in Indian Literatures from the 10th century to the Modern Age*, does require few introductory words. Yet, notwithstanding the popular nature of the topic—the Indian *alaṃkāraśāstra* (lit. ‘science of embellishments’)—no volume published so far has offered a time-line perspective like the one proposed here. Though individual contributions that have appeared in national and international academic journals might have discussed specific issues pertaining to different periods in the history of *alaṃkāraśāstra*, this volume aspires to bring together papers focused exclusively on research topics located in the period starting from the 10th century and ending in the modern era.

The ‘science of embellishments’ is traditionally acknowledged to have had its beginnings in Bharata’s *Nāṭyaśāstra*, the renowned treatise on the performing arts.¹ Despite the fact that the work does not focus primarily on the theory of literature, the concepts which later on became its core (e.g. the theory of *rasa*) are present there in an embryonic form and marginally discussed in the frame of the manifold classification of Indian theatrical forms (*daśarūpaka*). Other, scattered evidence

¹ The *Nāṭyaśāstra* is supposedly dated between 200 BCE and 200 CE but estimates generally vary and place it between 500 BCE and 500 CE.

does point to the existence of earlier treatises devoted to the subject of poetics, with authors' names and quotations from their works handed down by Bharata and the later theoreticians, but unfortunately, those texts, to the best of our knowledge, have not survived in their original form to our times.

The *alaṃkāraśāstra* reached its apogee between the 6th and the 10th century of our era, the period marked by the formulation and evolution of such concepts as *rasa* ('aesthetic sentiment'), *alaṃkāra* ('poetical ornament'), *mārga/rīti* ('the way [of poetry]') and *dhvani* ('resonance'), to mention only the few most relevant. These foundational notions were proposed and theorised in works such as Bhāmaha's *Kāvyaṭīkā* (7th century), *Kāvyaḍarśa* of Daṇḍin (c. 7th–8th century), the *Kāvyaṭīkāśāstra* (with auto-commentarial *vṛtti*) of Vāmana (8th century), the *Kāvyaṭīkā* of the great Kaśmīri theoretician Rudraṭa (9th century) and the pivotal *Dhvanyāloka* of Ānandavardhana (9th century).

The above-mentioned treatises were indubitably the primary object of Indologists' interests—the result of the common assumption that nothing 'new' and original came to be produced in the field of Sanskrit poetics after the 10th century. However, although the post-10th century authors often exploited concepts formulated by the earlier theoreticians, they have also proposed new ideas and approaches enriched by original, theoretical systematisations. Later works might show considerable and well-attested continuity of previous theoretical trends, but they also introduce surprising novelty into the field. This novelty is not restricted simply to the theorisation, but also offers examples of direct application within the newly composed texts. The late medieval and premodern productions, despite their general anchorage in the earlier tradition, have proposed, for example, new conceptualisations in some specific theoretical trends (definitions, concepts, etc.). A few of such works are well known and have been studied, like Bhoja's encyclopaedic *Sarasvatīkaṇṭhābharaṇa* (11th century), the *Pratāparudrayaśobhūṣaṇa* of Vidyānātha (14th century), Appayya Dīkṣita's *Citramīmāṃsā* and *Kuvalayānanda* (16th century) and the *Rasagaṇādhara* by Jagannātha

Paṇḍitarāja (17th century). Some have eluded scholarly attention for decades and only recently been ‘discovered’ and appreciated, like the *Alaṃkāraratnākara* of Śobhākareśvaramitra (late 12th century).² Yet others still await their in-depth examination and interpretation, like the *Alaṃkāramañjūṣā* by Bhaṭṭa Devaśaṅkara Purohita (18th century).

The *alaṃkāra* treatises are not the only privileged subject matter of this volume as its large part has been devoted to texts not directly related to the broad category of Indian poetics. The employment of figures of speech and the ensuing literary impact have been examined both through the lens of the Classical Sanskrit as well as productions in other languages to offer a wider perspective.

Our use of the plural in words such as ‘worlds’, ‘poetics’ and ‘literatures’ in the title of our volume is not coincidental. The spirit guiding the issue was to cover different aspects of Indian rhetoric beyond the obvious chronological by including perspectives from various cultural areas of the sub-continent and its many languages (both Sanskrit and the vernaculars). In order to promote productive, multilingual encounters with view of expanding the scope of the volume, our intention was to take into account the plurality of Indian literatures without giving exclusive prominence to any one of them.

The initial outline of the proposed editorial project listed a number of issues as possible starting points for investigation into the worlds of poetics. Such diversified approach would allow, we thought, for several avenues to be explored, all intrinsically different in approach and conceptualisation. In the present volume, we have grouped the articles under a number of broad heads which follow our initial concept: continuity of tradition, novel approaches and implementations, and modern adaptations.

² This peculiar *alaṃkāra* work which proposed a refutation of many of Ruyyaka’s conclusions and aimed at the reformulation of the figures of speech as discrete forms of cognition was the object of study by Somdev Vasudeva (2016. *Lakṣaṇam Aparyālocitābhidhānam*—Śobhākara’s Resistance to Ruyyaka. In: E. Franco, and I. Ratić (eds). *Around Abhinavagupta. Aspects of the Intellectual History of Kashmir from the Ninth to the Eleventh Century*. Münster: Lit Verlag: 495-530).

The first focal point is the persistent anchorage of the post-10th century authors and their works in the traditional schools of poetics (*alaṃkāra*, *dhvani*, etc.), the matter addressed by a number of papers in this volume.

In her article, *The Winding Ways of Poetry: Ratnaśrījñāna on Daṇḍin's mārgas*, **Lidia Wojtczak** demonstrates how Ratnaśrījñāna, a Buddhist Sinhalese polymath and the author of the earliest known commentary on the *Kāvyaḍarśa* (*Ratnaśrīṭīkā*, 952 CE), “uses philosophical discussions and archetypes to expand on Daṇḍin's rather cursory engagement with the methodology of the ‘ways’ to create a truly śāstric schema” (Wojtczak 2020: summary). In her view, Ratnaśrījñāna, not fully satisfied with Daṇḍin's reasoning, unifies the original verses focusing on the *mārgavibhāga* into a comprehensive theory which recognises Vaidarbha and Gauḍīya as bases of all other ‘ways’. Based on the in-depth analysis of relevant passages from the *Ratnaśrīṭīkā* and *Kāvyaḍarśa*, Wojtczak concludes that Ratnaśrījñāna: “imbues Daṇḍin's discussion of ‘ways’ with an epistemic perspective and creates a methodological template, based on established śāstric principles, which is impervious to the ambiguities of the *guṇas* and the opacity of the entire system of *mārgas*” (Wojtczak 2020: 13–14).

Similar theoretical concerns, connected to the *Kāvyaḍarśa*, are expounded by **Victor B. D'Avella** in his paper titled *Recreating Daṇḍin's Styles in Tamil*. The contribution, which takes as its starting point the analysis of the concept of *guṇa*, tries to discern “how these qualities, some of which are specific to Sanskrit grammar (phonology, composition, etc.) are transferred to Tamil, a language with a very different sound inventory and patterns of morphology” (D'Avella 2020: 18). The study of how the *śabdaguṇas* (‘qualities of sound’) are ‘transported’ from the original Sanskrit text into its Tamil rendering is accomplished through close analysis and informed translation of selected passages of the *Taṇṭiyalāṅkāraṃ* (12th century), with parallel reading of relevant excerpts from the *Vīracōḷiyam* by Puttamittiraṇ. In D'Avella's view, a close focus on ‘qualities’ that turn ordinary language into poetry opens

up a discussion on the ongoing vitality of the well-known poetic trends and their after-lives beyond the Sanskrit cosmopolis.

The next paper, *Kāvya's Repeat Performances: Intersections of Aesthetics, yoga-parikarma-bhāvanā, and the Logic of Medium-Specificity in Daśarūpaka's Discussion of śāntarasa*, authored by **Deven M. Patel**, focuses on the specific issue related to the viability of the 'peaceful aesthetic sentiment'. In author's opinion the scholarly debate on the *rasa* theory has left behind "an implication made in the middle of the tenth century that *śāntarasa* eludes theorization with respect to the theater (*nāṭya*) but may function within the exclusive theory of poetry (*kāvya*)" (Patel 2020: summary). Through a close analysis of the fourth chapter of Dhanañjaya's *Daśarūpaka* (975 CE), read together with some relevant commentaries, the author shows how the ambiguous responses to this theoretical text discuss the impossibility of *śāntarasa*'s viability in the context of theatre but allow for its presence in poetry thanks to the 'synergy' between *alaṃkāraśāstra* and Yoga psychology.

Marta Karcz, in her contribution, *The Ripeness of Poetry: Innovation in the Concept of kāvyapāka as Introduced by Bhoja*, draws attention to the theory of 'ripeness of poetry' in the *Sarasvatīkaṇṭhābharana* and the *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*. The *kāvyaapāka*, a concept which "relies on comparison between a poem and a fruit as they likewise must come to fruition to reach perfection" (Karcz 2020: summary), has been theorised and dealt with in several *alaṃkāra* works. The author of the article gives an overview of these systematisations and presents King Bhoja's innovative approach to the concept. Based on extensive translations of carefully selected passages from the *Sarasvatīkaṇṭhābharana* and the *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*, Karcz demonstrates how the 11th-century theoretician expanded the concept of 'ripeness' offering new perspective which enriched the long debate on *kāvyaapāka* in Sanskrit poetics.

The second issue proposed as a possible avenue for theoretical investigation in the context of the post-10th century implementation of poetics in Indian literatures is the 'evolution' of the employment of stylistic devices in parallel with historical, social and/or cultural changes. This topic is addressed by **David Pierdominici Leão** in his paper

Singing a(n) (a)laukika Body: A Note on the Theorization of utprekṣā and Its Application in the Pāṇḍyakulodayamahākāvya. The author analyses the employment of the figure of ‘trans-logical attribution’ in a 16th century South Indian *mahākāvya* composed by Maṇḍalakavi. The study is preceded by a scrupulous presentation of the theoreticians’ conceptualisation of *utprekṣā*. Pierdominici Leão puts in perspective the theoretical ground of this rhetorical device with the ways the author of the *Pāṇḍyakulodaya* portrays the new idiom of royal ideology based upon the divinisation of the figure of the King, reversing the *kāvya* convention of the *nakhaśikhavarṇana* (lit. ‘description [starting] from the (toe)nails to the head’).

The article by **Piotr Borek** focuses on yet another field of investigation proposed for the volume, namely the usage of work(s) on poetics as a political tool, justifying, legitimizing and celebrating power. His contribution, *Watch out, Pun! Śleṣa device in Brajbhasha Courtly Literature*, addresses the specific use of the figure of *śleṣa* (‘double entendre’) in a 17th-century Braj poem, the *Śivrajbhūṣan* (1673), composed by Bhūṣaṇ Tripāthī for the Maratha leader Shivaji Bhosle. Basing his arguments on the translation and analysis of selected passages, Borek shows how a work on poetics can be used as a tool aimed at the celebration of political power. Moreover, in author’s opinion, Bhūṣaṇ’s *śleṣa alaṃkāras*, defined by Borek as ‘explicit simile-based identifications’, differ from the double entendre described by Sanskrit theoreticians. In the work under study, these figures are communicated to the reader through textual hints and furnished with explanations—the actualization of the poet’s wish to be fully understood.

The last thematic avenue of the volume covers yet another specific aspect connected to poetics, namely the employment of certain rhetorical device(s) in the post-10th century works of Indian literatures, this time created *ex tempore*. **Hermina Cielas**, in her contribution, *Embellishments Turned into Challenges. The Transformation of Literary Devices in the Art of the sāhityāvadhāna*, analyses in a systematic manner one specific feature related to the literary version of the Indian ‘art of attentiveness’ of Sanskrit. Focusing on several rhetorical figures

that were extensively dealt with in the *alaṃkāra* works, Cielas illustrates how they became the ‘roots’ for several tasks in the contemporary *sāhityāvadhāna* performance. The study focuses on the ways in which the re-adjustments of literary embellishments are brought about by the requirements of the performative arts in the modern era.

The seven contributions collected in the volume identify and explore the manifold approaches and interpretative possibilities of the subject at hand. In India, the *alaṃkāraśāstra* has been cultivated as a science from a very early date. It had and still has a relevant impact on literary production in the Indian subcontinent, that too not only in Sanskrit but also in the vernaculars. Obviously, the papers assembled in the present volume do not exhaust the topic and the possibilities of interpretation but they may be taken as a starting point in the discussion on the post-10th century Indian ‘worlds of poetics’.

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